



Real People. Real Possibilities:

DON SCHONHARDT, MAYOR

Economic
Development
Department

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Statement to the Board of Education of the Hilliard City Schools.

Presented by David Meeks, Economic Development Director

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When it comes to Issue 9, no matter what side you are on, we all want the same thing, to Protect Hilliard's Future and to keep Hilliard beautiful, they are not mutually exclusive.

My job as Economic Development Director is to evaluate the impact that the proposed charter amendment will have on our community for the years to come. And, although well intentioned, this charter amendment **will have unintended negative consequences** for our community.

If the proposed charter amendment is enacted, our community will experience:

- Traffic Congestion and decreased quality of life amenities
- Likely litigation at the hands of developers, and
- Lack of economic development competitiveness.

Let me first address; **Traffic Congestion and decreased quality of life amenities**

The proposed charter amendment **will not** prevent additional apartments or homes from being built in Hilliard. Developers will continue to build a variety of residences. The charter amendment, however, will result in these developments being built without adequate and safe roadways to accommodate these new developments.

The City of Hilliard has taken a holistic approach in developing our community's roadways and thoroughfares, utilizing TIFs to **encourage** developers to build public roadways that benefit the entire community. Ohio law **only** requires developers to address the traffic impacts of their specific development, which often means ill-conceived and inadequate left or right turn lanes abutting particular developments. Developers are **not** required to build new connecting roads or widen existing roads to address future traffic requirements. Losing the ability to leverage developers to go beyond that required by law to build and/or improve the public roadways surrounding their developments will be a direct result of this charter amendment.

Taking away the City's ability to utilize state authorized financing mechanisms that are available to every other community in central-Ohio will have the unintended negative consequence of creating unsafe roadway conditions and traffic congestion in our community that ultimately leads to a decreased quality of life for our residents.

Potential Costly Litigation

In the recent year, a charter amendment situation has unfolded in the City of Powell. Because of the **unintended negative consequences** of that amendment, a suit was brought against the City of Powell for violating property owners' rights. This is precisely what could happen in Hilliard if this amendment is passed.

The belief by many is that a 60 day wait to allow citizens the opportunity to referendum a zoning change will stop a development from occurring. This is false. Rarely is it the case; rather it merely slows down the development process and potentially pitting the City against the developer in court. In the end, law suits are brought on by property owners who have the constitutional right to develop their land. Governments rarely win these types of law suits; and traditionally the property owners' right to develop their land prevails.

We have many clear examples of the fallout of unintended negative consequences that happen in the wake of similar charter amendments similar to what has been proposed here in Hilliard, and we cannot ignore that evidence. Our city will suffer, the community will suffer and our residents will ultimately pay the price.

Lack of competitiveness for economic development

Finally, a community that suffers from inadequate, ill-conceived roadways and public infrastructure is not attractive to potential commercial enterprises like restaurants, retailers and large employers. A lack of commercial development would certainly have long-lasting detrimental effects on the Hilliard community.

12 years ago the unintended negative consequence of former Mayor Tim Ward's attempt **to halt residential development** resulted in just the opposite effect, a complete shut-down of commercial development while residential development continued to flourish. The proposed charter amendment, while well intentioned, will produce the same result. History has a way of repeating itself.

The economic development policies that the City has employed over the past 12 years have been tremendously successful for the entire community. Income tax receipts have grown from \$13 million to nearly \$26 million. 6,500 new jobs, new pools, new roads, additional police officers have all come to the community. The new commercial property valuation has exceeded new residential property valuation in nearly each of the past 12 years and over \$300 million in new commercial development have benefited all of our community partners including the Hilliard City School District.

As a result of our economic development policies, today we are not only competitive locally but globally. Hilliard has made tremendous progress during the past decade in improving old and inadequate infrastructure while providing many new quality of life amenities for our community. The unintended negative consequences of Issue 9 will return Hilliard to a time when this community was not development friendly. We simply need to look to the past to see that Hilliard will return to being uncompetitive for economic development and job growth within central-Ohio. Simply, Issue 9 turns back the clock on the progress that we all have made.

We all want to Protect Hilliard's Future and to keep Hilliard beautiful. The District's and the City's interests are generally aligned and we all want to see the entire Hilliard community prosper. We all want the same thing - but this charter amendment is not the way to get there.

The City of Hilliard is committed to working together with our community partners to capitalize on our recent successes. This particular charter amendment has many negative consequences that Hilliard's citizens are likely not aware of, but now must seriously consider. I encourage the Board of Education to not endorse this charter amendment.